

[Home](#) > [Electronic Reading Room](#) > [Document Collections](#) > [NUREG-Series Publications](#) > [Staff Reports](#) > [NUREG-1767](#)

Environmental Impact Statement on the Construction and Operation of a Mixed Oxide Fuel Fabrication Facility at the Savannah River Site, South Carolina - Final Report (NUREG-1767)

On this page:

- [Publication Information](#)
- [Abstract](#)

Download complete document

The following links on this page are to documents in Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF). See our [Plugins, Viewers, and Other Tools](#) page for more information. For successful viewing of PDF documents on our site please be sure to use the latest version of Adobe.

- NUREG-1767, Volume 1
 - [Introductory Pages \(PDF - 93 KB\)](#)
 - [Chapters 1 and 2 \(PDF - 6.70 MB\)](#)
 - [Chapter 3 \(PDF - 3.16 MB\)](#)
 - [Chapters 4 to 8 and Appendix A \(PDF - 2.15 MB\)](#)
 - [Appendix B \(PDF - 6.80 MB\)](#)
 - [Appendices C to E \(PDF - 512 KB\)](#)
- NUREG-1767, Volume 2
 - [Appendices F to K \(PDF - 2.80 MB\)](#)
 - Appendix L
 - [Part 1 - Pages 1 to 102 \(PDF - 7.69 MB\)](#)
 - [Part 2 - Pages 103 to 242 \(PDF - 8.79 MB\)](#)
 - [Part 3 - Pages 243 to 348 \(PDF - 9.51 MB\)](#)

Publication Information

Manuscript Completed: January 2005

Date Published: February 2005

Division of Waste Management and Environmental Protection
Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, DC 20555-0001

[Availability Notice](#)

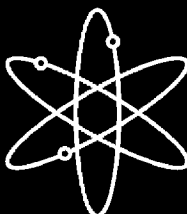
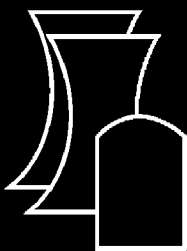
Abstract

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) has contracted with Duke Cogema Stone & Webster (DCS) to design, construct, and operate a proposed Mixed Oxide (MOX) Fuel Fabrication Facility that would convert depleted uranium and weapons-grade plutonium into MOX fuel. The proposed MOX facility would be located on the DOE's Savannah River Site in South Carolina. Use of the proposed facility to produce MOX fuel would be part of the DOE's surplus plutonium disposition program. The purpose of the DOE program is to ensure that plutonium produced for nuclear weapons and declared excess to national security is converted to proliferation-resistant forms.

This final environmental impact statement (FEIS) was prepared in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission's (NRC's) regulations for implementing NEPA, and the guidance provided by the Council on Environmental Quality regulations implementing the procedural provisions of NEPA. This FEIS evaluates the potential environmental impacts of the proposed action. The document discusses the purpose and need for the proposed action, describes the proposed action and its reasonable alternatives, describes the environment potentially affected by the proposal, presents and compares the potential environmental impacts resulting from the proposed action and its alternatives, and identifies mitigation measures that could eliminate or lessen the potential environmental impacts. The document also includes comments received on the draft environmental impact statement and NRC's responses.

[Privacy Policy](#) | [Site Disclaimer](#)

Friday, February 23, 2007



Environmental Impact Statement on the Construction and Operation of a Proposed Mixed Oxide Fuel Fabrication Facility at the Savannah River Site, South Carolina

**Chapters 1 through 8 and
Appendices A through E**

Final Report

**U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards
Washington, DC 20555-0001**



Environmental Impact Statement on the Construction and Operation of a Proposed Mixed Oxide Fuel Fabrication Facility at the Savannah River Site, South Carolina

Chapters 1 through 8 and Appendices A through E

Final Report

Manuscript Completed: January 2005

Date Published: January 2005

**Division of Waste Management and Environmental Protection
Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, DC 20555-0001**



ABSTRACT

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) has contracted with Duke Cogema Stone & Webster (DCS) to design, construct, and operate a proposed Mixed Oxide (MOX) Fuel Fabrication Facility that would convert depleted uranium and weapons-grade plutonium into MOX fuel. The proposed MOX facility would be located on the DOE's Savannah River Site in South Carolina. Use of the proposed facility to produce MOX fuel would be part of the DOE's surplus plutonium disposition program. The purpose of the DOE program is to ensure that plutonium produced for nuclear weapons and declared excess to national security is converted to proliferation-resistant forms.

This final environmental impact statement (FEIS) was prepared in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission's (NRC's) regulations for implementing NEPA, and the guidance provided by the Council on Environmental Quality regulations implementing the procedural provisions of NEPA. This FEIS evaluates the potential environmental impacts of the proposed action. The document discusses the purpose and need for the proposed action, describes the proposed action and its reasonable alternatives, describes the environment potentially affected by the proposal, presents and compares the potential environmental impacts resulting from the proposed action and its alternatives, and identifies mitigation measures that could eliminate or lessen the potential environmental impacts. The document also includes comments received on the draft environmental impact statement and NRC's responses.

CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	iii
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	xvii
ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS	xxiii
1 PURPOSE OF AND NEED FOR ACTION	1-1
1.1 Introduction	1-1
1.1.1 Surplus Plutonium Disposition Program	1-1
1.1.2 MOX Fuel Fabrication Facility	1-3
1.2 Description of the Proposed Action and Connected Actions	1-6
1.2.1 Proposed Action	1-6
1.2.2 Connected Actions	1-9
1.3 Purpose of and Need for the Proposed Action	1-11
1.4 Scope of the EIS	1-12
1.4.1 Scoping Process	1-12
1.4.2 Issues Studied in Detail	1-15
1.4.3 Issues Eliminated from Detailed Study	1-16
1.4.4 Preparation of the Final Environmental Impact Statement	1-16
1.4.5 Other National Environmental Policy Act Documents Related to This Action	1-16
1.5 Cooperating Agencies	1-17
1.6 Other State and Federal Agencies	1-17
1.7 References for Chapter 1	1-18
2 ALTERNATIVES, INCLUDING THE PROPOSED ACTION	2-1
2.1 No-Action Alternative — Continued Storage of Surplus Plutonium	2-1
2.2 Proposed Action — Description of Mixed Oxide Fuel Fabrication Facilities and Connected Actions	2-2
2.2.1 Introduction	2-2
2.2.2 Pit Disassembly and Conversion Facility	2-3
2.2.2.1 Description of the Pit Disassembly and Conversion Facility	2-3
2.2.2.2 Processes Occurring in the PDCF	2-4
2.2.2.3 Radioactive Effluents and Wastes at the PDCF	2-6
2.2.3 MOX Fuel Fabrication Facility	2-6
2.2.3.1 Description of the MOX Fuel Fabrication Facility	2-6
2.2.3.2 Processes Occurring in the Proposed MOX Facility	2-8
2.2.3.3 Radioactive Effluents and Wastes at the Proposed MOX Facility	2-13
2.2.4 Waste Solidification Building	2-14
2.2.4.1 Description of the Waste Solidification Building	2-14
2.2.4.2 Processes Occurring in the WSB	2-15
2.2.4.3 Radioactive Effluents and Wastes at the WSB	2-17
2.2.5 Sand Filter Technology Option	2-17

CONTENTS (Cont.)

2.3	Alternatives Considered But Not Analyzed in Detail	2-19
2.3.1	MOX Facility Location in F-Area	2-19
2.3.2	Technology and Design Options	2-20
2.3.2.1	Dry Compared to Wet Impurity Removal	2-20
2.3.2.2	Reagent Storage	2-20
2.3.2.3	Acid Recovery Process	2-21
2.3.2.4	Glovebox Cooling	2-21
2.3.2.5	Treatment of Aqueous Laboratory Waste	2-21
2.3.2.6	Pellet Grinding Process	2-22
2.3.2.7	Facility Heat Exchangers	2-22
2.3.2.8	Physical Security Barriers	2-22
2.3.2.9	Material Transfer from the PDCF to the Proposed MOX Facility	2-22
2.3.3	Immobilization of Surplus Plutonium	2-23
2.3.4	Off-Specification MOX Fuel	2-24
2.3.5	Parallex Project Alternative	2-25
2.3.6	MIX MOX Alternative	2-26
2.4	Comparison of Alternatives	2-27
2.5	Recommendation Regarding the Proposed Action	2-39
2.6	References for Chapter 2	2-39
3	AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT	3-1
3.1	General Site Description	3-1
3.2	Geology, Seismology, and Soils	3-1
3.2.1	Geology	3-3
3.2.2	Seismology	3-4
3.2.3	Soils	3-5
3.3	Hydrology	3-5
3.3.1	Surface Water	3-6
3.3.2	Groundwater	3-10
3.4	Meteorology, Emissions, Air Quality, and Noise	3-14
3.4.1	Meteorology	3-14
3.4.2	Emissions	3-17
3.4.3	Air Quality	3-18
3.4.4	Noise	3-25
3.5	Ecology	3-26
3.5.1	Terrestrial	3-26
3.5.1.1	Vegetation	3-27
3.5.1.2	Wildlife	3-29
3.5.2	Aquatic	3-32
3.5.3	Wetlands	3-33
3.5.4	Protected Species	3-34
3.6	Land Use	3-35
3.6.1	Savannah River Site Land Use	3-35
3.6.2	Off-Site Land Use	3-36
3.7	Cultural and Paleontological Resources	3-36
3.7.1	Archaeological Resources	3-37

CONTENTS (Cont.)

3.7.2	Historic Structures	3-39
3.7.3	Traditional Cultural Properties	3-39
3.7.4	Paleontological Resources	3-39
3.8	Infrastructure	3-40
3.8.1	Electricity	3-40
3.8.2	Water	3-40
3.8.3	Fuel	3-40
3.8.4	Roads and Railroads	3-41
3.8.5	Site Safety Services	3-41
3.9	Waste Management	3-41
3.10	Human Health Risk	3-45
3.10.1	Hazard Exposure Pathways	3-46
3.10.1.1	Pathways for Human Exposure to Radiation and Radioactivity	3-46
3.10.1.2	Pathways for Human Exposure to Chemicals	3-47
3.10.1.3	Physical Hazards	3-47
3.10.2	Receptors	3-48
3.10.3	Baseline Radiological Dose and Risk	3-49
3.10.4	Baseline Chemical Exposure and Risk	3-53
3.10.4.1	Chemical Risk Assessment Background	3-53
3.10.4.2	SRS Chemical Baseline Risks	3-54
3.10.5	Baseline Physical Hazard Risks	3-56
3.11	Socioeconomics	3-58
3.11.1	Population	3-58
3.11.2	Employment and Unemployment	3-58
3.11.3	Income	3-59
3.11.4	Housing	3-59
3.11.5	Community Resources	3-61
3.11.6	Traffic	3-64
3.12	Aesthetics	3-67
3.12.1	General Description of the Site	3-67
3.12.2	Description of the Location of the Proposed Facilities	3-67
3.13	References for Chapter 3	3-67
4	ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES	4-1
4.1	Introduction	4-1
4.2	Impacts of the No-Action Alternative	4-2
4.2.1	Introduction	4-2
4.2.2	Human Health Risk	4-3
4.2.2.1	Radiological Risk	4-3
4.2.2.2	Chemical Exposure and Risk	4-3
4.2.2.3	Physical Hazards	4-5
4.2.2.4	Facility Accidents	4-5
4.2.3	Air Quality	4-5
4.2.4	Hydrology	4-6
4.2.5	Waste Management	4-6

CONTENTS (Cont.)

4.3	Impacts of the Proposed Action	4-6
4.3.1	Human Health Risk	4-7
4.3.1.1	Radiological Risk	4-7
4.3.1.2	Chemical Exposure and Risk	4-11
4.3.1.3	Physical Hazards	4-14
4.3.2	Air Quality	4-14
4.3.2.1	Construction	4-17
4.3.2.2	Operations	4-18
4.3.3	Hydrology	4-24
4.3.3.1	Surface Water	4-24
4.3.3.2	Groundwater	4-25
4.3.4	Waste Management	4-26
4.3.4.1	Construction	4-27
4.3.4.2	Operations	4-30
4.3.5	Accident Impacts	4-37
4.3.5.1	Accidents Considered	4-37
4.3.5.2	Radiological Human Health Risk	4-45
4.3.5.3	Chemical Human Health Risk	4-50
4.3.5.4	Hydrology	4-52
4.3.5.5	Waste Management	4-54
4.3.6	Deactivation and Decommissioning	4-55
4.3.6.1	Introduction	4-55
4.3.6.2	Decommissioning Process	4-56
4.3.6.3	Decommissioning Impacts	4-57
4.3.7	Environmental Justice	4-60
4.3.7.1	Introduction	4-60
4.3.7.2	Impacts of the No-Action Alternative	4-64
4.3.7.3	Impacts of the Proposed Action	4-67
4.3.8	Sand Filter Technology Option	4-69
4.4	Indirect Impacts	4-71
4.4.1	Transportation	4-71
4.4.1.1	Scope of the Analysis	4-71
4.4.1.2	Transportation Impacts	4-73
4.4.1.3	Highly Enriched Uranium	4-77
4.4.1.4	Spent MOX Fuel	4-78
4.4.2	Conversion of Uranium Hexafluoride to Uranium Dioxide	4-79
4.4.3	MOX Fuel Use	4-79
4.5	Cumulative Impacts	4-81
4.5.1	Cumulative Impacts at the SRS	4-81
4.5.1.1	Cumulative Impacts of the MOX, PDCF, and WSB Facilities	4-86
4.5.1.2	Cumulative Impacts of the No-Action Alternative	4-94
4.5.2	Cumulative Impacts of Transportation	4-94
4.6	Cost-Benefit Analysis	4-95
4.6.1	Introduction	4-95
4.6.2	National Costs and Benefits	4-96

CONTENTS (Cont.)

4.6.3	Regional Costs and Benefits	4-98
4.6.3.1	Regional Costs	4-98
4.6.3.2	Regional Benefits	4-100
4.7	Resource Commitment	4-102
4.7.1	Unavoidable Adverse Environmental Impacts	4-102
4.7.2	Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitments of Resources	4-108
4.7.3	Relationship between Short-Term Uses of the Environment and Long-Term Productivity	4-109
4.8	References for Chapter 4	4-111
5	MITIGATION	5-1
5.1	Introduction	5-1
5.2	Mitigation Measures	5-1
5.2.1	Hydrology	5-6
5.2.2	Soils	5-8
5.2.3	Ecology	5-9
5.2.4	Air Quality	5-10
5.2.5	Noise	5-11
5.2.6	Infrastructure	5-12
5.2.7	Waste Management	5-12
5.2.8	Human Health Risk	5-12
5.2.9	Cultural, Historical, and Paleontological Resources	5-14
5.2.10	Aesthetics	5-15
5.2.11	Socioeconomics	5-15
5.2.12	Environmental Justice	5-16
5.3	References for Chapter 5	5-18
6	ENVIRONMENTAL REGULATIONS AND PERMITS	6-1
6.1	References for Chapter 6	6-12
7	GLOSSARY	7-1
8	LIST OF PREPARERS	8-1
	APPENDIX A: Protected Species	A-1
	APPENDIX B: Letters of Consultation	B-1
	APPENDIX C: Transportation Risk Analysis	C-1
	APPENDIX D: Socioeconomics	D-1
	APPENDIX E: Human Health Risk	E-1
	APPENDIX F: Air Quality Impact Assessment	F-1

CONTENTS (Cont.)

APPENDIX G: Additional Impacts of the No-Action Alternative	G-1
APPENDIX H: Additional Impacts of the Proposed Action	H-1
APPENDIX I: Scoping Summary Report	I-1
APPENDIX J: Public Comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement and NRC Responses	J-1
APPENDIX K: Commenter and Comment Document Index	K-1
APPENDIX L: Public Comment Letters and Transcripts	L-1

FIGURES

1.1	Location of the Savannah River Site and the F-Area	1-7
1.2	Locations of the proposed MOX facility, the PDCF, and the WSB in the F-Area on the SRS complex	1-8
1.3	Locations of DOE facilities containing surplus plutonium	1-10
2.1	Principal steps in the aqueous polishing process	2-9
2.2	Principal steps in the fuel fabrication process	2-10
3.1	Regional location of the SRS	3-2
3.2	Locations of principal surface water features at the SRS	3-7
3.3	Locations of surface water and wetlands in the F-Area	3-8
3.4	Aquifers at the SRS	3-11
3.5	Annual wind rose for the SRS	3-16
3.6	Air quality control regions, South Carolina and Georgia	3-21
3.7	Current land cover in the area of the project site	3-30
3.8	Roadways in the vicinity of the SRS	3-42
4.1	Waste streams generated by the proposed MOX facility	4-34
4.2	Minority population concentration in census block groups within an 80-km radius of the SRS F-Area	4-65
4.3	Low-income population concentration in census block groups within an 80-km radius of the SRS F-Area	4-66
C.1	Trailer carrying five UF ₆ cylinders in overpacks	C-15
C.2	MOX fresh fuel package loaded in SGT	C-16
C.3	Scheme for NUREG-0170 classification by accident severity category for truck accidents	C-17
F.1	Receptor locations used in air quality modeling	F-12
H.1	Areas affected by facility construction activities	H-6

TABLES

1.1	Surplus plutonium inventories at DOE sites	1-11
2.1	Comparison of alternatives	2-28
3.1	Estimated emissions from four counties around the SRS and SRS point sources in 1999	3-19
3.2	Toxic air pollutant emissions at the SRS in 1999	3-20
3.3	Ambient air quality standards and range of pollutant levels in the vicinity of the SRS	3-22
3.4	Aiken County maximum allowable noise levels	3-25
3.5	Major forest types at the SRS	3-28
3.6	Current waste generation rates and inventories at the SRS	3-43
3.7	Sources and contributions to the U.S. average individual radiation dose	3-51
3.8	Radioactive atmospheric releases from SRS operations for 2000	3-52
3.9	Radioactive liquid releases from SRS operations for 2000	3-53
3.10	Estimated radiation exposures to the public from SRS emissions in 2000	3-54
3.11	Modeled site boundary ambient concentrations of select SRS toxic air pollutant emissions in comparison with SCDHEC standards and EPA health risk-based guideline levels	3-57
3.12	ROI population statistics for selected years	3-59
3.13	REA employment by industry, 2000	3-60
3.14	REA unemployment rates	3-60
3.15	REA personal income	3-61
3.16	City, county, and ROI housing characteristics	3-62
3.17	Local public service employment	3-63
3.18	Local physicians data	3-65
3.19	Local school district data	3-65
3.20	Local medical facility data	3-66

TABLES (Cont.)

3.21	Average annual daily traffic in the vicinity of the SRS	3-66
4.1	Radiological impacts from continued plutonium storage in current locations	4-4
4.2	Annual water usage and wastewater discharges for the sites of continued plutonium storage	4-6
4.3	Annual estimated radiological impacts to facility workers, SRS employees, and the public from normal operations at the proposed facilities	4-9
4.4	Annual physical hazard impacts from normal operations	4-15
4.5	MOX facility and WSB construction emissions	4-18
4.6	Maximum air quality impacts during construction of the facility	4-19
4.7	MOX, PDCF, and WSB operations emissions	4-21
4.8	Maximum air quality impacts during operation of the proposed facilities	4-22
4.9	Comparison of maximum concentration increments and PSD increments	4-23
4.10	Annual waste volumes from the construction of the facilities compared with waste management capacities at the SRS	4-28
4.11	Waste volumes from the 10-year operational period of the facilities compared with waste management capacities at the SRS	4-31
4.12	Accidents evaluated for the proposed facilities	4-38
4.13	Estimated human health radiological impacts to SRS employees from hypothetical facility accidents	4-40
4.14	Estimated human health radiological impacts to the collective off-site public from hypothetical facility accidents	4-41
4.15	Estimated human health radiological impacts to the maximally exposed member of the public from hypothetical facility accidents	4-43
4.16	Potential impacts of accidental chemical releases	4-53
4.17	Summary of radiological impacts from routine facility decommissioning	4-57
4.18	Minority population characteristics in the vicinity of the SRS	4-63

TABLES (Cont.)

4.19	Low-income population characteristics in the vicinity of the SRS	4-64
4.20	Comparison of waste volume and disposal cost for HEPA and sand filters	4-70
4.21	Total collective population transportation risks	4-75
4.22	Routine single-shipment impacts to a maximally exposed individual	4-77
4.23	Comparison of human exposure for ammonium diuranate and dry conversion processes	4-79
4.24	Estimated cumulative impacts to air quality from MOX, PDCF, and WSB facility operations and other activities at the SRS	4-87
4.25	Estimated annual cumulative radiological dose and latent cancer fatalities resulting from MOX, PDCF, and WSB facility operations and other activities at the SRS	4-89
4.26	Estimated cumulative waste generation at the SRS resulting from operation of the MOX, PDCF, and WSB facilities and other activities at the SRS	4-91
4.27	Estimated cumulative impacts to resource use and employment from MOX, PDCF, and WSB facility operations and other activities at the SRS	4-93
4.28	Estimated cumulative transportation impacts of facility operations and shipment of radioactive materials from other sources	4-95
4.29	Summary of project costs and benefits in the REA	4-97
4.30	Unavoidable impacts of constructing and operating the proposed facilities	4-103
4.31	Irreversible and irretrievable commitments of resources for the proposed MOX, PDCF, and WSB facilities	4-110
5.1	Summary of DCS mitigation commitments and additional measures identified by NRC staff for reducing or avoiding impacts	5-2
6.1	Applicable environmental regulations and consents or activities	6-2
A.1	Rare, threatened, and endangered species from Aiken and Barnwell Counties, South Carolina, and Burke County, Georgia	A-4
C.1	Summary route data	C-11

TABLES (Cont.)

C.2	Shipment information	C-14
C.3	Single-shipment radionuclide inventories	C-14
C.4	Fractional occurrences for truck accidents by severity category and population density zone	C-18
C.5	Estimated release fractions for Type A and Type B packages under various accident severity categories	C-19
C.6	External dose rates and package sizes used in RADTRAN	C-22
C.7	General RADTRAN input parameters	C-22
C.8	Single-shipment collective population transportation risks	C-25
D.1	Jurisdictions included in the regional economic area and ROI at the SRS	D-4
D.2	ROI local government financial data	D-8
D.3	ROI school district financial data	D-13
E.1	Chemical inventory, spill quantity, concentrations, and mole fraction calculations	E-4
E.2	Scenario meteorology	E-10
E.3	Evaporative release modeling results	E-11
E.4	Physical property data	E-14
E.5	Estimated annual radiological releases from the facilities during normal operations	E-19
E.6	SRS employee population distribution centered at the proposed MOX facility on the SRS	E-20
E.7	Joint frequency distribution used for calculation of receptor dose from facility air emissions	E-21
E.8	Projected off-site population distribution at the SRS for the public for the year 2030	E-23
E.9	Ingestion parameters used in GENII for calculation of radiological exposure of the public for normal and accidental air emissions	E-24

TABLES (Cont.)

E.10	Food production data used in GENII for calculation of radiological ingestion exposure of the public for normal and accidental air emissions	E-26
E.11	Centerline distance to site boundary from the proposed MOX facility stack for the primary 16 compass directions	E-29
E.12	Source terms for detailed accident analyses	E-29
E.13	Radionuclide quantities released to the atmosphere for each accident type	E-30
F.1	Emission factors, activity levels, and emissions for facility construction	F-5
F.2	Emission factors, activity levels, and emissions for emergency generators	F-8
F.3	Process emissions during operations	F-10
F.4	Characteristics of modeled sources	F-13
H.1	Effects of construction on socioeconomics	H-14
H.2	Effects of operations on socioeconomics	H-16

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The consortium of Duke Project Services Group, Inc., COGEMA, Inc., and Stone & Webster, Inc., has formed a Limited Liability Company called Duke Cogema Stone & Webster (DCS). DCS has been hired by the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) to design, construct, and operate a facility (the proposed MOX facility) that would convert depleted uranium and surplus weapons-grade plutonium into mixed oxide (MOX) fuel. The DOE is responsible for the surplus plutonium disposition program for the United States. Within this program, the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) has the independent responsibility of determining whether the proposed MOX facility can be built and operated in a safe and environmentally acceptable manner. The proposed action requiring the February 2003 draft environmental impact statement (DEIS) and this NRC final environmental impact statement (FEIS) involves a decision by the NRC whether to authorize DCS to construct and later operate the proposed MOX facility at DOE's Savannah River Site (SRS) in South Carolina. DCS has submitted to the NRC, among other documents, a revised Construction Authorization Request (CAR) and a revised environmental report (ER), in seeking authority to begin constructing the proposed MOX facility.

This FEIS was prepared by the staff of the NRC and its contractor, Argonne National Laboratory, and complies with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), NRC regulations for implementing NEPA (Title 10, Part 51 of the *Code of Federal Regulations* [10 CFR Part 51]), and the applicable Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations.

The proposed MOX facility would convert 34 metric tons (MT) (37.5 tons) of surplus weapons-grade plutonium into MOX fuel. This facility would be built on 16.6 ha (41 acres) of land in the F-Area of the SRS. If the NRC approves the CAR, DCS plans to request a 10 CFR Part 70 license to possess and use special nuclear material at the proposed MOX facility. Such a license would allow DCS to operate the proposed MOX facility for 20 years. The facility would be designed for a maximum annual throughput of 3.5 MT (3.9 tons) of plutonium.

Feedstock (surplus plutonium dioxide and depleted uranium dioxide) would be required to be transported to the SRS to make the MOX fuel. The surplus plutonium is currently stored at seven DOE facilities at various locations in the United States. Additionally, depleted uranium hexafluoride would need to be transported from a DOE site (assumed to be the gaseous diffusion uranium enrichment facility in Portsmouth, Ohio) to a commercial fuel fabrication facility (assumed to be the Global Nuclear Fuel Americas, LLC, in Wilmington, North Carolina), where it would be converted to depleted uranium dioxide, which would then be transported to the SRS. Once manufactured, the MOX fuel would be transported to mission reactors, where it would be irradiated. For purposes of complying with NEPA's requirements, it is assumed that one or more reactors will later be authorized by the NRC to use MOX fuel, and the FEIS includes a generic evaluation of using MOX fuel in a reactor. In order for a specific commercial reactor to use MOX fuel, an amendment to its 10 CFR Part 50 NRC license would be required. The NRC would analyze the site-specific environmental impacts related to such an amendment if and when such a request was made to the NRC. Following irradiation and storage at reactor sites, the spent MOX fuel would be transported to a geologic repository (assuming one is later

licensed by the NRC to operate) for final disposal, and the FEIS includes a discussion of spent MOX fuel transportation impacts.

In addition to presenting the potential environmental impacts of the proposed MOX facility and the related fuel cycle impacts, this FEIS discusses two proposed DOE facilities — the Pit Disassembly and Conversion Facility (PDCF) and the Waste Solidification Building (WSB) — which would also be located at the SRS, that would be required to support operation of the proposed MOX facility. The PDCF would be required to convert approximately 25.6 MT (28.2 tons) of surplus plutonium from a metallic form to plutonium dioxide powder. The remaining quantity of surplus plutonium, called “alternate feedstock,” would be in a form that would be suitable to go directly to the proposed MOX facility. The proposed MOX facility would remove impurities from the plutonium dioxide and mix it with depleted uranium dioxide to make MOX fuel.

The WSB would process liquid waste streams from the PDCF and proposed MOX facility. The WSB may also be used for temporary storage and processing of other waste forms generated at the proposed MOX facility and the PDCF before such wastes are transferred to the SRS waste management system or shipped off-site for disposition. In addition, infrastructure upgrades would be needed to support the proposed MOX facility. These upgrades would include constructing waste transfer pipelines, realigning electric utility lines, and adding access roads.

A brief summary of FEIS Chapters 1-6 follows. Chapter 1 of the FEIS discusses the purpose and need for this action and its relationship to the DOE’s surplus plutonium disposition program. The fundamental purpose of this DOE program is to ensure that surplus weapons-grade plutonium is converted to proliferation-resistant forms. The DOE’s program is intended to lay the foundation for parallel disposition of excess Russian plutonium, thereby protecting against proliferation of materials capable of making weapons of mass destruction.

Chapter 2 of this FEIS describes the proposed action and alternatives to the proposed action, including the no-action alternative. The no-action alternative consists of the continued storage of surplus plutonium at various locations throughout the DOE complex, in the event the NRC does not approve the proposed MOX facility. This alternative is evaluated in detail in Chapter 4. Other alternatives to the proposed action discussed in Chapter 2 include alternate locations for the proposed MOX facility in the F-Area, alternate technology and design options, immobilizing surplus plutonium instead of producing MOX fuel, deliberately making off-specification MOX fuel, the “MIX MOX” alternative, and the Parallex Project (which involves irradiating the MOX fuel in Canadian deuterium uranium reactors).

Chapter 3 describes the environment that would be affected by the proposed action and includes discussions on soils, hydrology, air quality, local ecology, waste management, risks to human health, and socioeconomic issues.

Chapter 4 evaluates and compares the environmental effects of the proposed action and the no-action alternative. Significant or more important potential impacts are discussed in Chapter 4, which includes the following topics: (1) human health, (2) air quality, (3) hydrology,

(4) waste management, (5) accident impacts, (6) decommissioning, and (7) environmental justice. Indirect impacts of transportation of radioactive materials, conversion of depleted uranium, and reactor use are discussed in Chapter 4. The following potential impacts for the no-action alternative and proposed action are considered to be less significant and are discussed in Appendixes G and H: (1) geology, seismology, and soils; (2) noise; (3) ecology; (4) land use; (5) cultural and paleontological resources; (6) infrastructure; and (7) socioeconomics. A summary of the significant or more important potential impacts discussed in Chapter 4 is presented below.

The annual collective dose to members of the public (i.e., those living and working within 80 km [50 mi] of the SRS) produced by routine operation of the proposed MOX facility, the PDCF, and the WSB would be expected to result in a latent cancer fatality (LCF) rate of approximately 0.0009/yr or less. Routine operation of the proposed MOX facility, the PDCF, and the WSB is expected to produce small air quality impacts and would not cause exceedance of any ambient air quality standard level for criteria pollutants at the SRS.

Construction and routine operation of the proposed facilities would not be expected to cause any disproportionately high and adverse impacts to low-income or minority populations in the SRS vicinity. Of the accidents evaluated, a hypothetical PDCF tritium release accident had the highest estimated short-term impacts, approximately 3 LCFs among members of the off-site public. Such an accident also had the highest estimated 1-year exposure impact, including the ingestion dose, of up to 100 LCFs among members of the off-site public. However, it is regarded as highly unlikely that such an accident would occur, and the risk to any population, including low-income and minority communities, is considered to be low. Nevertheless, the communities most likely to be affected by a significant accident would be minority or low-income, given the demographics and prevailing wind direction. The extent to which low-income or minority population groups would be affected would depend on the amount of material released and the direction and speed of the wind.

Transportation of uranium and plutonium feedstock materials, transuranic waste, fresh MOX fuel, and spent MOX fuel would result in approximately 3,300,000 to 8,200,000 km (2,050,000 to 5,100,000 mi) traveled by 1,497 to 3,512 truck shipments over the operations period of the proposed MOX facility. Up to 1 LCF might be expected from the radioactive nature of the cargo. (Estimated LCFs for members of the public and the transportation crews were 0.2 to 0.4 and 0.1 to 0.3, respectively.) One to two latent fatalities from vehicle emissions were estimated, and no fatalities (0.078 to 0.20 fatality) from the physical trauma of potential vehicle accidents were estimated.

Chapter 4 of the FEIS also evaluates the use of MOX fuel in a generic reactor using a 40% MOX fuel core. For both normal operations and design-basis accidents, the impacts of using MOX fuel in a reactor would not be significantly different from the impacts of a reactor using 100% low-enriched uranium fuel. For highly unlikely beyond-design-basis accidents, the impacts for a reactor using a 40% MOX fuel core could be up to 14% greater than for a reactor using 100% low-enriched uranium fuel. Since no reactor licensee has yet sought the authority to use MOX fuel, the transportation of fresh MOX fuel is also evaluated on a generic basis, using a surrogate reactor located in the Midwest.

Chapter 4 also presents the costs and benefits of the proposed action. The primary benefit of operating the proposed MOX facility would be the resulting reduction in the supply of weapons-grade plutonium available for unauthorized use. Converting surplus plutonium in this manner is viewed as being a safer use/disposition strategy than the DOE's continued storage of surplus plutonium, as would occur under the no-action alternative, because it would reduce the number of locations where the various forms of plutonium are stored. Further, converting weapons-grade plutonium into MOX fuel in the United States — as opposed to immobilizing a portion of it as the DOE had previously planned to do — lays the foundation for parallel disposition of weapons-grade plutonium in Russia, which distrusts immobilization because of its failure to degrade the plutonium's isotopic composition. Converting surplus plutonium into MOX fuel is thus viewed as a better way of ensuring that weapons-usable material will not be obtained by rogue states and terrorist groups. Implementing the proposed action is expected to promote the above nonproliferation objectives.

In addition to the above primary benefits, there would be secondary economic benefits of the proposed action. Impacts of construction on the regional economic area (REA) and region of influence (ROI) would be beneficial with respect to jobs and income. During operations, the proposed MOX facility, PDCF, and WSB would be expected to generate 490 direct and 780 indirect jobs, producing a total income of \$64 million a year in the REA. The economic cost benefit analysis for the proposed action shows an overall net benefit to the ROI and REA of \$1,940 million. National economic costs for the proposed MOX facility, PDCF, and WSB are estimated to be \$4,064 million (in 2003 dollars). The national economic benefits would include adding employment and income in various sectors of the economy through the purchase of goods and services required during construction and operation.

Chapter 5 of the FEIS identifies mitigation measures that could eliminate or lessen the potential environmental impacts of the proposed action. The NRC evaluated proposed mitigation measures identified by DCS and identified additional measures that could reduce or eliminate adverse environmental impacts of the proposed action. On the basis of its independent review, the NRC is making a preliminary conclusion that the potential significant impacts of the proposed action can be mitigated. However, any possession and use license issued to DCS should be conditioned on the commitments made by DCS and the various proposed NRC mitigation requirements discussed in Chapter 5.

Chapter 6 presents the many federal, state, and local environmental requirements that would be applicable to the proposed MOX facility.

After weighing the costs and benefits of the proposed action, comparing alternatives, and considering the comments received on the DEIS (see FEIS Appendix J), the NRC staff, in accordance with 10 CFR 51.91(d), includes in this FEIS its final NEPA recommendation regarding the proposed action. As discussed further in Chapter 2, the NRC staff continues to recommend that, unless safety issues mandate otherwise, the action called for is the issuance of the proposed license to DCS, with conditions to protect environmental values. As stated in Chapter 2, the NRC staff concludes that (1) the applicable environmental requirements presented in FEIS Chapter 6 and (2) the proposed mitigation measures discussed in FEIS

Chapter 5 would eliminate or substantially lessen any potential adverse environmental impacts associated with the proposed action.

Appendix J includes a summary of the comments and responses received on the DEIS. Ninety-four commenters submitted about 750 comments on the DEIS. Appendix J also identifies changes in the FEIS text based on the comments and revised accident analyses from new design information for the WSB provided by DCS since publication of the DEIS.

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

The following is a list of the acronyms, initialisms, abbreviations, and units of measure used in this document. Some acronyms and abbreviations used only in tables, figures, equations, or as reference callouts are defined in the respective tables, figures, equations, and reference lists.

Acronyms, Initialisms, and Abbreviations

7Q10	7-day low flow, 10-year recurrence flow
AADT	average annual daily traffic
ADU	ammonium diuranate
AEA	Atomic Energy Act
Ag	silver
AgNO ₃	silver nitrate
ALARA	as low as reasonably achievable
ALI	annual limit on intake
ALOHA	Areal Locations of Hazardous Atmospheres (computer code)
Am	americium
ANL-W	Argonne National Laboratory-West
ANSI	American National Standards Institute
APA	aqueous polishing area
APSF	Actinide Packaging and Storage Facility
AQCR	Air Quality Control Region
BPIP	Building Profile Input Program
BRP	Reagents Processing Building
CAA	Clean Air Act
CANDU	Canadian Deuterium Uranium (reactor)
CAR	Construction Authorization Request
CAS	Chemical Abstract Services
CEDE	committed effective dose equivalent
CEQ	Council on Environmental Quality
CERCLA	Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act
CFR	<i>Code of Federal Regulations</i>
CH-TRU	contact-handled transuranic (waste)
CIESIN	Center for International Earth Science Information Network
CIF	Consolidated Incineration Facility
CO	carbon monoxide
CO ₂	carbon dioxide
CPT	cone-penetration test
CSWTF	Central Sanitary Wastewater Treatment Facility
CWA	Clean Water Act

D&D	deactivation and decommissioning
DCP	dry conversion process
DCS	Duke Cogema Stone & Webster
DDE	deep dose equivalent
DEIS	draft environmental impact statement
DOE	U.S. Department of Energy
DOT	U.S. Department of Transportation
DWPF	Defense Waste Processing Facility
EA	environmental assessment
EBR-II	Experimental Breeder Reactor-II
EDE	effective dose equivalent
EIS	environmental impact statement
EPA	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
ER	Environmental Report
ERPG	Emergency Response Planning Guideline
ETF	Effluent Treatment Facility
FEIS	final environmental impact statement
FGR	Federal Guidance Report
FOF	F-Area Outside Facility
FONSI	Finding of No Significant Impact
FR	<i>Federal Register</i>
FSER	final safety evaluation report
FTE	full-time equivalent
FY	fiscal year
Ga	gallium
GE	General Electric
GENII	Generation II (computer code)
GRP	gross regional product
H ₂ C ₂ O ₄	oxalic acid
HEPA	high-efficiency particulate air (filter)
HEU	highly enriched uranium
HF	hydrogen fluoride
HI	hazard index
HLW	high-level (radioactive) waste
HQ	hazard quotient
HRCQ	highway route controlled quantity
HSWA	Hazardous and Solid Waste Amendments
HVAC	heating, ventilation, and air conditioning
HYDOX	hydride-oxidation
ICRP	International Commission on Radiological Protection
IMPLAN	Intelligent Multi-Resource Planning (computer code)

INEEL	Idaho National Engineering and Environmental Laboratory
ISA	integrated safety analysis
ISCST3	Industrial Source Complex Short-Term (version 3) model
ISFSI	interim spent fuel storage installation
ITP	in-tank precipitation
KAMS	K-Area Material Storage (SRS)
LANL	Los Alamos National Laboratory
LCF	latent cancer fatality
L_{dn}	day-night average sound level
L_{eq}	equivalent sound pressure level
LEU	low-enriched uranium
LLC	Limited Liability Company
LLNL	Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory
LLW	low-level (radioactive) waste
LSA	low specific activity
LTA	lead test assembly
MAR	material at risk
MBTA	Migratory Bird Treaty Act
MC&A	material control and accounting
MEI	maximally exposed individual
MMI	Modified Mercalli Intensity (earthquake intensity scale)
MOX	mixed oxide (plutonium dioxide and uranium dioxide)
MPQAP	MOX Project Quality Assurance Plan
MSL	mean sea level
MWMF	Mixed Waste Management Facility
NAAQS	National Ambient Air Quality Standards
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NERP	National Environmental Research Park
NESHAPs	National Emission Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants
NMSS	Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards (NRC)
NNSA	National Nuclear Security Administration
NO_2	nitrogen dioxide
NOAA	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NOI	Notice of Intent
NO_x	nitrogen oxides
NPDES	National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System
NRC	U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
NRHP	<i>National Register of Historic Places</i>
NSC	National Safety Council
NSPS	New Source Performance Standards

O ₃	ozone
OAQPS	Office of Air Quality Planning and Standards (EPA)
OFASB	Old F-Area Seepage Basin
OHHER	Office of Health and Environmental Research (DOE)
OML	oxalic mother liquor
ORR	Oak Ridge Reservation
OSHA	Occupational Health and Safety Administration
PAG	protective action guide
PAH	polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbon
Pb	lead
PDCF	Pit Disassembly and Conversion Facility
PEIS	programmatic environmental impact statement
PM	particulate matter
PM ₁₀	particulate matter with a diameter less than or equal to 10 micrometers
PM _{2.5}	particulate matter with a diameter less than or equal to 2.5 micrometers
PMF	probable maximum flood
PSD	Prevention of Significant Deterioration
PSSCs	principal structures, systems, and components
Pu	plutonium
Pu (IV)	tetravalent plutonium
Pu (III)	trivalent plutonium
PuO ₂	plutonium oxide
QA	quality assurance
RCRA	Resource Conservation and Recovery Act
REA	regional economic area
REG	mitigation measures instituted to ensure compliance with regulations, permits, and guidelines
RFETS	Rocky Flats Environmental Technology Site
ROD	Record of Decision
ROI	region of influence
S&D PEIS	Storage and Disposition Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement
SA	Supplement Analysis
SAAQS	State Ambient Air Quality Standard
SC	South Carolina; state route
SCAPA	Subcommittee on Consequence Assessment and Protective Action (DOE)
SCDHEC	South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control
SCDNR	South Carolina Department of Natural Resources
SCSHPO	South Carolina State Historic Preservation Officer
SER	safety evaluation report
SGT	Safeguards Transporter
SHPO	State Historic Preservation Office
SIP	state implementation plan

SNF	spent nuclear fuel
SNM	special nuclear material
SO ₂	sulfur dioxide
SO _x	sulfur oxides
SPCC	spill prevention control and countermeasures
SPD	surplus plutonium disposition
SPD EIS	Surplus Plutonium Disposition Environmental Impact Statement
SPL	sound pressure level
SR	State Route
SRARP	Savannah River Archaeological Research Program
SREL	Savannah River Ecology Laboratory
SRS	Savannah River Site
SWB	standard waste box
TAP	toxic air pollutant
TCDD	tetrachlorodibenzo-para-dioxin
TEDE	total effective dose equivalent
TEEL	temporary emergency exposure limit
TI	transport index
TIGR	thermally induced gallium removal
TRAGIS	Transportation Routing Analysis Geographic Information System
TRU	transuranic (radioactive waste)
TRUPACT	transuranic package transporter
TSCA	Toxic Substances Control Act
TSD	Transportation Safeguards Division (DOE Albuquerque Operations Office)
TSP	total suspended particulates
U	uranium
UF ₆	uranium hexafluoride
UO ₂	uranium dioxide
U.S.C.	<i>United States Code</i>
VOC	volatile organic compound
VRM	visual resource management
WAC	waste acceptance criteria
WIPP	Waste Isolation Pilot Plant
WM PEIS	<i>Final Waste Management Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement for Managing Treatment, Storage, and Disposal of Radioactive and Hazardous Waste</i>
WMA	Wildlife Management Area
WSB	Waste Solidification Building

Units of Measure

Bq	becquerel(s)	km ²	square kilometer(s)
Btu	British thermal unit(s)	kV	kilovolt(s)
Ci	curie(s)	L	liter(s)
μCi	microcurie(s)	lb	pound(s)
cm	centimeter(s)	m	meter(s)
d	day(s)	m ²	square meter(s)
dB	decibel(s)	m ³	cubic meter(s)
dBA	A-weighted decibel(s)	μm	micrometer(s)
dps	disintegration(s) per second	mg	milligram(s)
°C	degree(s) Celsius	mi	mile(s)
°F	degree(s) Fahrenheit	mi ²	square mile(s)
ft	foot (feet)	min	minutes
ft ²	square foot (feet)	mm	millimeter(s)
ft ³	cubic foot (feet)	mo	month(s)
g	gram(s) or gravitational acceleration	mph	mile(s) per hour
μg	microgram(s)	mrem	millirem(s)
gal	gallon(s)	mSv	millisievert(s)
gpm	gallon(s) per minute	MT	metric ton(s)
h	hour(s)	MWh	megawatt-hour(s)
ha	hectare(s)	nCi	nanocurie(s)
hg	mercury	Pa	Pascal(s)
Hz	hertz	ppb	part(s) per billion
in.	inch(es)	ppm	part(s) per million
K	kelvin degrees (temperature)	s	second(s)
kg	kilogram(s)	Sv	sievert(s)
km	kilometer(s)	yd ³	cubic yard(s)
		yr	year(s)